Holding NET by Mission abroad

4184. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received from UGC for holding NET by our Mission abroad;

(b) if so, in which countries;

(c) whether it is being done on the behest of the Ministry of External Affairs or the UGC; and

(d) who is going to incur expenses involved in this exercise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OFEXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has decided to conduct National Eligibility Test (NET) abroad also. The Centres will be at Indian Missions. A request has been sent by the UGC to Indian Missions to nominate a nodal person at their place to co-ordinate the examination.

(c) The decision to hold NET abroad is that of the UGC. The Embassy of India, Beijing received a proposal for holding NET from the Indian students who are currently studying in China under scholarship programme provided through India China Culture Exchange Programme. Accordingly, the Embassy requested the UGC for conduct of the NET abroad.

(d) The expenditure in this exercise will be incurred by the University Grants Commission.

Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline

4185. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed Indo-Iran Gas pipeline was discussed at the meeting between Indian Prime Minister and the President of Pakistan in July, 2001;

(b) whether it has been finalised to lay the said pipeline through Pakistan or it would be laid *via* the sea;